

**Frank Blethen
Publisher
The Seattle Times**

Dear Frank,

We write to express our frustration that The Seattle Times Co. is publishing advertisements endorsing one of the state's two candidates for governor, as well as a statewide referendum campaign.

We reporters, photographers, editors, columnists, producers and artists work every day to carry out this newspaper's mission to communicate the news to the Northwest in as fair and objective a manner as possible. We are proud of our stewardship role and your continuous support over the years, despite significant financial burdens.

That is why the decision to publish these ads is so disappointing. It threatens the two things we value the most, the traits that make The Seattle Times a strong brand: Our independence and credibility.

We know you value those things, too. The Seattle Times Company has done an exemplary job providing value to advertisers while also practicing independent journalism.

The company has explained this decision as a creative attempt to grow revenue during the political ad season. In this economic environment initiatives for more revenue are welcomed.

But consider its possible effect on The Seattle Times' core mission, journalism.

We strive to remain independent from the institutions we cover. We shine a light on the process from the outside. We are not part of the process.

This ad campaign threatens to compromise that integrity. By sponsoring an ad for one gubernatorial candidate, The Seattle Times – the entire company – has become one of the top contributors in support of that candidate's campaign. We are now part of a campaign's machinery, creating a perception that we are not an independent watchdog.

The publication of the first ad came one day after The Seattle Times showed its commitment to old-fashioned independent journalism by sponsoring a debate between the two candidates, moderated by one of our political reporters. During that debate, both candidates pointed to stories or editorials written by our staff to support their points. To the candidates and the viewing public, we weren't part of one campaign or another. We were the arbiters, a trusted, third-party source of information. That is core to our identity.

The ads undermine the work we do and threaten to muddy that perception with the readers who rely on us.

[Signature]
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Kenneth W. Bushnell

[Signature]
 Moir MacQuinn

Agneta Schuman

Kari Viki Uuo

Lynn Thompson

Steve Mitchell

Emily Haggerty

Kristen Jackson

Kathryn Joy

Ala Becker

Rick Lund

[Signature]
[Signature]
 Mike C...

Sam Keller

Holly I Hube

Brian J. Cantrell

[Signature]

Wesley Brock

Heidi Ervin

[Signature]

[Signature]

Al Pate

Ed W...

[Signature]

Michael Fordham

Sanjay Bhatt

Enkehnottz
Kelly Shee

Quill Pay

Melissa Allison
Ritz Wong

Mark Noulie Mda/Berens

Rob Denilo

Holly L. Hube

Carole McCloskey

Grove Keas - gabriel campanario

Ken Lambert

Just L

Steph F. Ringman

Lauren Pakian

GREG GILBERT

Christine Willmussen

Cathy McLain

Katie Greene

David Brown

Quell M. Orr

Bob Ringman

Mary A. Cauffman

Jennifer Sumner

Lynn Thompson

Knigh R. Bay

St. Giller

Nancy Leson

Just L

BT Ltd

Ken 2 Armstrong

Hal Berntson

Larry Shee

Be L

Jane C. MacDonald

Rob Johnson

Angie Pitt

Besam Schocktt

For Neice

Just L

Mark Allen

Judy Owen

Carol Nakagawa

ALF FERNER

Nettgeri

Nena Kelley

Maureen Offner

W. P.

Kenneth W. Smith

Kevin Song

Beth Kaim

Andrew Garber

~~quaker~~
Cheryl E. Phillips

Sandi Doughton

~~Bill~~
Dean Rutz

Michael Upchurch

Leif Wasson

Paul Barnes

Mary Ann Gwinn

Joe Fry

Antelope Isle

Harrah Bink

Courtney Bethen Riffkin

Robert L. Payne

Misha Benson

Bettina Hansen

~~Jim Hill~~

Jim Holloway

Evan Bush

Robert McMurray

~~Art F. Lee~~

David Henderson

Bob Higgins

Paul Hunter

Russell E. Combsford

Mesa Z. Suds